

Pablo Picasso, *Girl Before a Mirror*, 1932
Cubism – painting



Key Facts:

Artist: Pablo Picasso was born in Spain in 1881 and died in 1973. He was the leading artist of the Cubist art movement.

Art period/style: Cubism, early 1900s (c. 1907 – 1920), centered in Paris, France

Key characteristics of that period: Cubist artists brought different views of their subject together in the same picture, resulting in paintings that appear fragmented and abstracted. These artists tried to show different viewpoints at the same time, within the same space. They emphasized the two-dimensional flatness of the canvas instead of creating the illusion of depth, breaking from the tradition in art of creating the illusion of space from a fixed viewpoint using devices such as linear perspective. The use of collage also entered the art world during this art movement.

Techniques: Oil painting, collage

Some Background: When Picasso was 20, he moved to Paris, France. While he was in Paris, his style of painting was consistently changing. Early on, he painted very traditional and realistic, and then his paintings became more abstract.

The Five Core Habits:

Practice the *Five Core Habits of Grammar* with art - NAMES (found on pgs. 18-19 in the Foundation Guide). Part of teaching is learning to ask a student good questions. This is a great activity for looking at art! Plus, you get to sneak in a little art history and technique along with.

5 CORE HABITS



NAMING

1. What do you call this?
2. Where does this name come from?
3. Are there any other names for this?



ATTENDING

1. What are the parts of this?
2. Where do you usually see this?
3. What makes this special?



MEMORIZING

1. What would help you memorize this? An acronym, a song, a chant, a picture, etc.
2. What did you already know about this?



EXPRESSING

1. Could you draw a picture of this or write a song about it? Could you act it out?
2. How does this make you feel?



STORYTELLING

1. Can you tell me a story about this?
2. Can I tell you a story about this?

N names (name things specifically)

A attending (look and listen carefully. Also- taste, smell, touch. Compare things.)

M memorizing (soak up facts and ideas. Memorize facts and relations of things to recall, connect, and expand new ideas to older ones from past memorizations.)

E expressing (express ideas creatively- reciting, drawing, singing, dancing)

S storytelling (hear and tell stories)

This helps us grasp the basic elements, vocabulary, and rules of any subject, and helps us progress more quickly toward comprehension and creativity in future studies.

Using the image on the first page, go through these questions:

N – Names:

- Name the artist, era/art style, and technique
- What can you find? Name the things you see
- How many people are there?
- Who is the person? What are they doing?
- What do you see?
- What colors do you see?
- What shapes do you see?
- Is this abstract art or realistic?

A – Attending

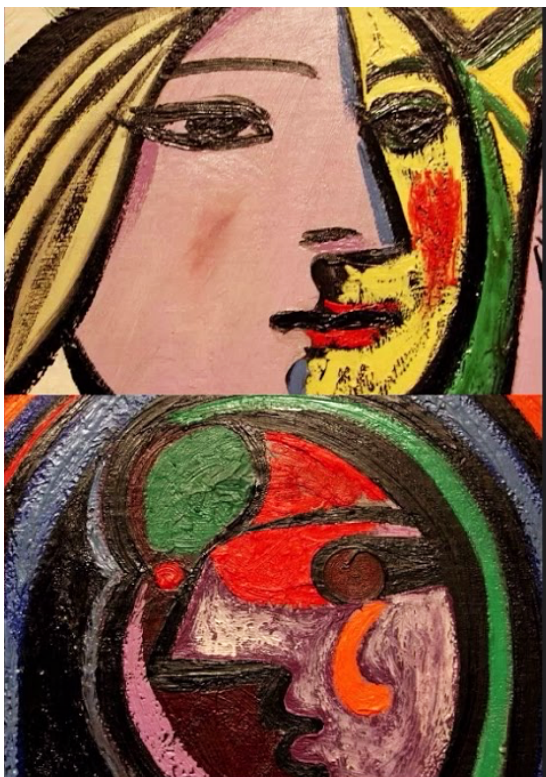
- What does the person in the painting see?
- What does she hear? Smell? Taste? What might she feel/touch?
- What emotions might she be feeling?
- How is color used?
- What is happening in the painting?

Attending to details – here is a close-up. What else do you notice now?

How has Picasso abstracted the girl? What do you notice about the eyes? Nose? Mouth?
Did you realize at first that this was a girl looking in the mirror? (Other than by knowing the title of the painting)



Here you can see the texture of his paint:



M – Memorize

Memorize the artist, time period, and facts about the artwork/technique.

E – Express

Express your thoughts and ideas about the art.

You can also express by trying the technique on your own. I have two fun Picasso art project ideas below:

Option 1: Picasso portraits

For this project you will need various colors of construction paper, crayons, scissors, and glue. Show your students examples of Picasso portraits. Be sure to explain how he would often abstract the figure and create the portrait in the Cubist style. To do this, he would often combine various views into a single portrait (for example- one eye from a profile view and one from a frontal view). Have your students draw the various facial features on different squares of paper. Then glue them onto the face and add more color with crayons as seen in the examples on the next page.

First, here are a few examples of Picasso portraits:





1962



1962



1962



1969



1962



1971



1967



1958



1960



1958



1962



1960



1962

And now, examples of the student art project:



And here is a fun chart for picking various views of eyes, noses, mouths, and ears:

Roll a Picasso

	Roll 1	Roll 2	Roll 3	Roll 4	Roll 5	Roll 6	Roll 7
	Head Shape	1st eye	2nd eye	Nose	Mouth	1st ear	2nd ear

ROLL-A-PICASSO				
	1st roll Face	2nd roll Eye	3rd roll Nose	4th roll Mouth

Option 2: Cubist violins or guitars

First, examples from the master:



Picasso, *Violin and Grapes*, 1912



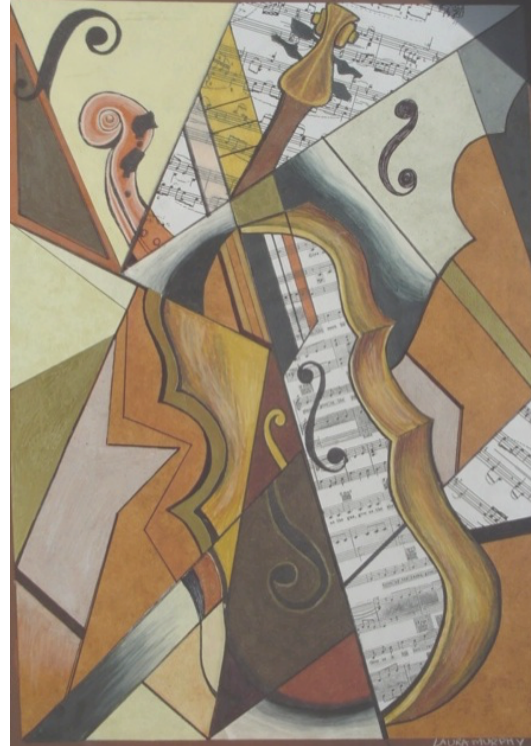
Picasso, *Violin Hanging on the Wall*, 1912

Here are reference images for the instruments. These are helpful for the students to look at as they draw parts of the guitar or violin.



Student examples:



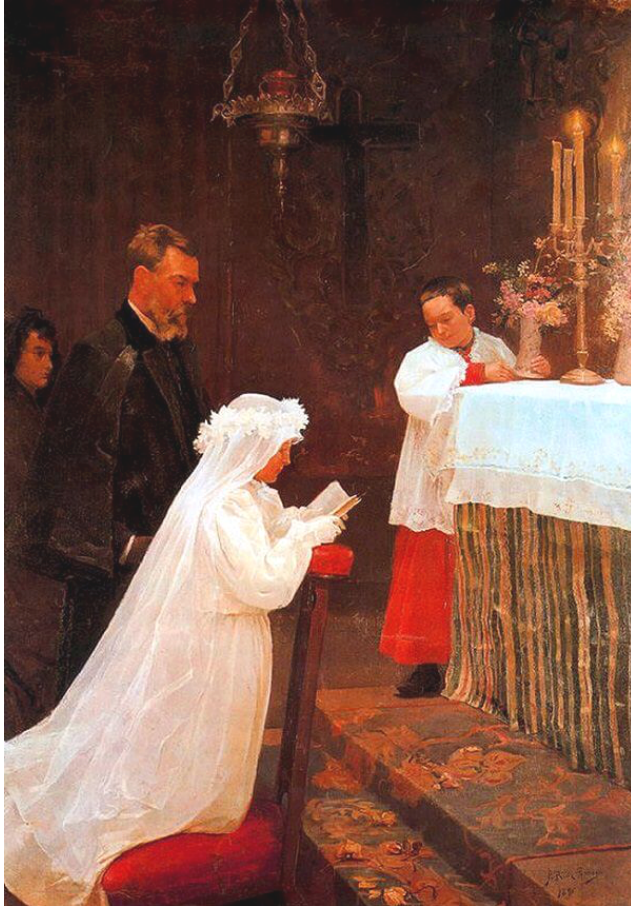


If you choose this project for your students, there are endless options for how to approach it. This would be mixed-media. You can start them on a single sheet of paper. They can draw various shapes of the violin or guitar and then color or paint them in. They can also add collage elements (as seen in the music above).

S – Story telling

Tell the story about this work of art.

Because so much of Picasso's artwork was abstract, many people who have not studied art think that Picasso had no true talent or art training. So, to show his artistic training and skill, here is a painting that he painted when he was only 15 years old.



First Communion, 1896

Now, you can refer to the image on the first page.

Picasso is most well-known for his Cubism style paintings. In these abstracted paintings, the subject appears to be cut up and put back together. *Girl Before a Mirror* was painted in 1932. In this painting, a woman is seen looking at her reflection in the mirror. As the woman on the left looks at her reflection on the right, you can notice that her reflection is different from real life. She looks sad in the reflection. The eyes are even more abstracted in the reflection, and Picasso used more blue and purple colors to portray a different mood. Yellows and reds are bright and cheery, whereas blues and other cool colors tend to give a sad feeling.

Picasso has translated the human body into various colors and shapes. Geometric patterns are seen throughout the painting. Cubism is used to break up the image and multiple perspectives of the girl are shown. Part of her face is seen from the profile view (as seen in her nose), while her eyes are shown from a frontal view. She is portrayed from the side, yet her reflection depicts her from the front. There also seems to be opposite concepts in this painting: day/sun and night/moon, youth and old age, light and shadow.